

East Cleveland Public Library
Special Board of Library Trustees Meeting
Purpose: Interview for the Executive Director
May 16, 2019
14101 Euclid Ave. East Cleveland, Ohio 44112
Flewellen Room
2:30 PM

Ms. Turner called the meeting to order at 2:39 PM

1266 MP3

I. CALL TO ORDER
a. ROLL CALL

Present: Ms. Turner, Ms. McClarin, Ms. Shaheed, Dr. Harris

A quorum exists. Present – 4; Absent - 2

Also present at the table were: Carlos Latimer (Interim Director), Mr. Ross Cockfield (CFO), Mr. E.F. Turner III (Exec. Admin. Assistant).

In the Audience is: Stephanie Chambliss.

II. Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Turner: Fantastic. It is our purpose for today, if you look at the agenda, is to interview the recommended candidate from the executive director search. That is all we're doing today, that and taking public questions. Is everybody good with that agenda? Can we take it from here?

Ms. McClarin: I would like to ask a question, now are we to go into executive session or are we not?

Ms. Turner: Mm-mm (negative).

Ms. McClarin: Okay.

Ms. Turner: We're going to do executive session in the next meeting.

Ms. McClarin: Okay.

Ms. Turner: This is just ... There are some things that we'll need to be prepared, and I'll talk to you guys about that.

Ms. McClarin: Okay.

Ms. Turner: Based on what happens today.

Ms. McClarin: Oh okay.

Ms. Turner: But we'll talk about that at the end view to the meeting.

Ms. McClarin: Okay.

Ms. Turner: But we're just taking this as strictly for interviews. [crosstalk 00:01:32] We'll have an open session to that.

Ms. McClarin: All right, then yes Madame President, I move that we approve the agenda.

Ms. Turner: Okay.

Ms. Shaheed: And I second it.

Ms. Turner: The we have a second it, Mr. Turner.

Discussion: None.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Turner (yes), Ms. McClarin (yes), Ms. Shaheed (yes), Dr. Harris (yes)

Yes – 4

Motion passes.

Ms. McClarin moved and Ms. Shaheed seconds the approval of the agenda.

The agenda is approved.

III. Interview of the Executive Director, East Cleveland Public Library

Ms. Turner: Okay, great. Well I am passing the chair ship of this meeting to the chair personnel, which is Ms. Pam McClarin here.

Ms. McClarin: Okay, are we still going to sing?

Ms. Turner: Only for the regular meetings.

Ms. McClarin: Oh okay, thank you very much. So, we don't have to stand and sing.

Ms. Turner: We'll ... To-

Ms. McClarin: Oh, this should be here. I'm sorry, thank you. Well good afternoon everyone.

Mr. Turner: Good afternoon.

Ms. McClarin: Thank you for being here. And I just would like to open up before we start our questioning and say that we had excellent interview ... Not interview, but we had excellent application process for hiring a new director. We were able to stick with our timeline that we presented to the board, that passed in February. As far, everything went pretty smooth. We already have three applications that were turned in... The committee was made up of myself and my chairperson, Ms. Shaheed. And then from the administration, Mr. Turner.

Ms. McClarin: We spent four hours on our three applications, so we really had good discussion. We constantly went back over the questions and made sure that everyone had a fair opportunity, including Mr. Latimer he was one of the applicants. Also, we had voted on that in order to get an interview and applicant had to support at least 80 And then Mr. Latimer was the only one who scored 80 or higher.

Mr. Turner: So, this is the only interview [crosstalk 00:03:42]-

Ms. McClarin: So, this is the only interview that we will be doing.

Mr. Turner: Okay.

Ms. McClarin: All of the records, it's on file everyone put the individual's name plus the individual who did the score. All of those are in the hands of administration.

Mr. Turner: Okay, great.

Ms. McClarin: And if you all see you have a questionnaire in front of you, and what we did after we saw that Mr. Latimer was going to be the only one to interview we

went through the questions again and tried to look at what would be relevant for him. Since he's already our interim director. And what we found was if you go through it, number four and number seven ... And the personnel committee was going to ask those questions, and we were saying that if anyone wanted to pick a question. If you could make it relevant to your committee in addition to what's on here. You could do that.

Ms. McClarin: For instance, you might say "Well I have a question I would like to ask." You can ask that question and not choose one on here.

Ms. Turner: Okay.

Ms. McClarin: Are you good Dr. Harris?

Dr. Harris: Yes.

Ms. McClarin: Do you want three minutes? Okay.

Dr. Harris: No, I'm fine.

Ms. McClarin: All right. So, at this point we want to welcome Mr. Latimer thank you for being here and thank you for the work you're already doing at the library, and it's an honor to have you here applying for the full position as executive director. And we want to start with question one, which is if you could tell us about your background including your education, some work experience, special skills, and your knowledge in this field.

Mr. Latimer: Okay thank you. First of all-

Ms. McClarin: You're welcome.

Mr. Latimer: It's an honor to be here as well. It's a privilege to come back and to lead this library, potential to lead this library on a permanent basis in the community that I grew up in. A community where I learn, I grow, I have fun. So, it's very humbling to sit here and participate in this process.

Mr. Latimer: My education, I'm a graduation of Shaw High School, proud graduate. I've lived in this community all the way up until 18. I started college, I did a semester at Baldwin Wallace, it was too expensive, so I transferred over where I was able to get a scholarship at the time. It was called Dyke College, it's now Myers University.

Ms. McClarin: Oh yeah.

Mr. Latimer: Where the initial four years I received a Bachelor's Degree in public administration. From there ... Actually, during the time, at 18, I was in college, I took on a page position at Cleveland Public Library. So, working part time and attending college I was able to somewhat find myself. However, working in libraries, I was kind of adopted to grow in this profession. I worked as a page shelving books for four years. At the time of receiving my degree I was promoted to a library associate. That role was to go out into the community and promote the summer reading club.

Mr. Latimer: So, I would go to the brass fellow, attend the schools, the recommend centers. Just to push reading initiatives in the city of Cleveland. Did a good job there, we had a large increase in the summer reading club enrollment. So, I was promoted to a full-time position of ... At the time I was like the assistant manager at the Carnegie West branch. From there I decided to attend library school, where I applied to Ken State University. Was accepted and I was transferred downtown at the main library where I worked in general reference department.

Mr. Latimer: Upon completing my library science degree I was promoted immediately to assistant branch manager of West Park branch, that's not reflected in my resume. Six months later, the deputy director, came over to West Park branch and said, "I need you to go over to East 131st Street branch to be the manager." I'm like "Wow!" I've never just someone just call and say, "Go take this job."

Ms. McClarin: Right.

Mr. Latimer: So, after doing my research, found out the manager quit, the children's librarian quit. The entire staff left except for the clerical circulation staff. It turned out the gangs had taken over that entire library in that community. So, I drove over there and it's like "Wow, what have I" ...

Ms. Turner: What have I agreed to do?

Mr. Latimer: But it wasn't a choice, the deputy director at the time Norman Holman. He's like "We need you to go over there and turn this branch around."

Ms. McClarin: Wow

Mr. Latimer: So, you know within a week I was there, I was outside. I was 23, 24 years old looking just like the kids that were there. They were outside smoking weed. So, the first thing I did was "If you guys are going to smoke weed, go smoke weed in the back of the building." "Oh, we're sorry, we can do this?" Just do it away from the library.

Mr. Latimer: So, I was able to establish trust and build a relationship with them. So, one of my goals was to establish a relationship with them and build trust with them, instead of calling the police and just telling them to get away. So, what type of program can we build to engage them...

Ms. Turner: Because they're here every day.

Mr. Latimer: Right, they're here, this is their community. We started doing arts and craft and graffiti. We started having little legal workshops on some of the issues they were dealing with.

Ms. McClarin: Excellent.

Mr. Latimer: We started book discussions around topics that they enjoyed. I introduced them to technology at the time, the internet was becoming the real thing. We got our first internet terminal. We started doing internet safety program. So, this is after like three years, because I was able to bring change to the committee. I was able to bring the adults back into the community. I was able to work with the vendors, and the store shops there. They were giving us donations. So, we really had turned that community around.

Mr. Latimer: Yeah, of course doing a good job you always get moved in a system like Cleveland. So, I was promoted to a position called supervisor of branches. It was to do more outreach to train in technology.

Ms. McClarin: Wow.

Mr. Latimer: To help assist in the administration of 28 libraries. I took on that responsibility under the director of branches, where we were able to secure the first Gates (Bill and Melinda Gates) grants. No, at the time East Cleveland received that grant as well. That goal was to increase the number of internet computers in the community. And also train the community on how to use those Microsoft products. Word, Excel, Outlook, things like that.

Mr. Latimer: So, my challenge was to educate our staff to then educate the public on utilizing those resources. So that was pretty much a five-year project. From there I was promoted to a new position, it was Head of Audio Video for the system. I was in charge of collection, development of the whole AV collection. I was responsible for all of the meeting rooms at all locations. And the main meeting room at Lake Shore and downtown.

Mr. Latimer: At that time, we were repurposing those spaces. We were increasing the technology; we identified a room booking system for the meeting room reservations. I was able to weed the collection, we were transferring and

moving from VHS collection to DVD's. So that was a big deal in the community.

Ms. McClarin: Right.

Mr. Latimer: However, we were able to increase the number of DVD's, where we saw circulation go up. And the community decided to get rid of the VHS players and purchase a DVD player. So, at that time other libraries followed, and circulation just grew tremendously. That was six years in the AV department. After that I was promoted again to director of branches, where I was responsible-

Ms. McClarin: Wow.

Mr. Latimer: For 28 libraries, 28 managers, a budget of over five million dollars. Which included the personnel staff, the buildings, updating the furniture. And also updating technology, doing performance management. I was the liaison to the IT department; I was the liaison for human resources as well. So that was another six years as the director of neighborhood libraries. And I was promoted to the highest position before the director's position. Let's see ... It was special assistant to the CEO, where our focus was to go out and win a levy to do community engagement at the state level, the local level.

Mr. Latimer: To work on policies and procedures in the system. And to ... We had to close a branch, which was Broadway. I was the face of that, it was very difficult, but it was a smooth transition. And we also had to relocate the South branch into another location. So those were big deals. At the time I was looking to be a director, my mom got sick and I decided I had reached my 30 years and I had to leave because I had to help her out. Then I received a call from Ms. Marcus-Bey saying, "Come work part time."

Ms. McClarin: Wow.

Mr. Latimer: So ...

Ms. McClarin: You really went through the whole system-

Mr. Latimer: Right.

Ms. McClarin: From a young person all the way up. So, there's no level for you that you have not touched, except what is about to be director, that's amazing.

Mr. Latimer: But sometimes in a system like that you have to leave, or you have to come from somewhere else. A lot of times when you've been at a place a long time ... You know you have a lot of haters. You have people see ... You know

there's no perfect candidate ever, so when you're somewhere and they see your strength, but they also see some of your weaknesses as well.

(Mr. Mays arrives at 2:45pm)

Ms. McClarin: Right. I would just like to pause at this time so that we can recognize our trustee Mr. Mays.

Mr. Mays: I came in at 2:45.

Ms. McClarin: For the record. And thank you, and I just want to bring Mr. Mays up to date. The president has turned the interviewing process over to the personnel committee, and we were just on our first question. You have a list of questions there, but you're not limited to that. If you want ... Yeah, to ask a question please feel free to ask. Especially if it's relevant to your committee, is what we're saying we would do. And so, Mr. Latimer was just going over his experience and how he came through the system of Cleveland Public.

Ms. McClarin: Our next question ... Well let's see, should we go around? We'll start with Dr. Harris.

Ms. Shaheed: Yeah, so number two.

Dr. Harris: Oh.

Mr. Turner: Or we can...

Dr. Harris: Yeah, I really hadn't wanted to ask a question.

Ms. Shaheed: Okay.

Dr. Harris: Who was the library director at Cleveland during most of that time? Andrew, was it...?

Mr. Latimer: Andrew Venable, who was the director as well. Actually, I worked under four directors in Cleveland. I was ... Well five, Dr. Gains, Marilyn Mason, Andrew Venable, then we had Holly Carroll, which was the interim for two or three years. That was crazy, and then Felton Thomas.

Dr. Harris: Okay. Well wouldn't you want to [crosstalk 00:15:44]-

Mr. Turner: Do you want to be able to ask the second question?

Dr. Harris: Please, I'm fine.

Mr. Turner: Okay.

Dr. Harris: Okay, let's keep moving.

Ms. McClarin: Well if you could explain to us what you know about the city of East Cleveland? We just learned that you grew up here, so I don't know if you want to respond on that, please do it.

Mr. Latimer: Yeah, I'm a proud former resident of East Cleveland, graduate of Shaw High School. I was always engaged in sports in this community. I was always engaged in the politics in this community.

Dr. Harris: Oh okay.

Mr. Latimer: I was a user of the library when I was a youth. North branch, Ms. Hart was the librarian there. And my mom and dad used to send me down there to get the Jet Magazines. So, we would go play basketball and before the library closed, we used to go to Bondies, the grocery store.

Ms. Turner: Yeah, Bondies Grocery.

Mr. Latimer: We would go there pick up some things, and I'd go pick up the Jet Magazine. Our family used to really look forward to that resource, until we started getting our own subscription to that. But also, I was introduced to reading fiction. Some of the teachers there that I had at Chambers elementary school, were big proponents of writing and reading. We would go there and do our book reports. And I just remember the layout of that library clearly.

Ms. McClarin: Oh yes.

Mr. Latimer: To this day. But it was a major impact on me coming into this profession. However just growing up in East Cleveland, I really wanted to be the City Manager.

Ms. McClarin: Okay.

Mr. Latimer: Because I used to see Frank Wise, I think he was the city manager.

Ms. McClarin: Yes.

Mr. Latimer: He used to drive around the vehicle in the community, and he was real engaging to the people. We used to be at the swimming pool, we used to be at the gym, they used to pass out donuts. They used to come up the area and just talk to us. And it's just like "Wow, this is a really polarizing person!" Who was really in touch with the people at the time? And I had visualized

myself at that time as a child, being not in that position but some leadership position down here in East Cleveland.

Ms. McClarin: That's nice.

Mr. Latimer: It has happened, interim. But I know East Cleveland is the first suburb of the city of Cleveland. It has a powerful history with the Rockefeller's, and Euclids. Up the hill, I know there's some community barriers, how the city comes together as a whole. I've seen Shaw High School from the old to the new. I remember the rec center; I was there when it was built.

Mr. Turner: Cool.

Mr. Latimer: I remember as a child in the late 60's during the political movement when people were walking through, the Black Nationalists. I remember emotions around the death of friends. There's a lot of trauma growing up in this community, but it's a lot of spirit as well.

Ms. McClarin: I feel the same way, that's why I sort of fell in love with East Cleveland. I am a Clevelander; everybody was doing community work with residents from East Cleveland. I just kind of fell in love with East Cleveland. And I don't care what part of greater Cleveland you're at, you have East Cleveland city residents, their support. And I think that one of the tasks it to try to get people to support East Cleveland as much as East Cleveland supports us. I don't know how ... Ms. Turner, your turn.

Ms. Turner: Okay, it's my turn. One of the things that I've noted since I've been on the board is consistently the administration has had concerns about the staff. And that there are some skills that would be ideal for our staff to have that are not present. And so, I personally love the belief that it's a matter of develop from an administrative standpoint. So, I would ask how would you go about the business of developing our staff so that it optimizes our program?

Mr. Latimer: Okay, that's a great question. One thing you have to have the confidence that the resources are available out there to develop the staff. We have to have a direction. We have to make sure we have those tools, and the staff is onboard with wanting to be great ambassadress to provide service to this community. Once you identify that the spirit is here, the desire ... You put in a plan, make sure that the organizations structure of ... Oh, somebody's calling.

Mr. Latimer: Make sure that the organization is very structured from policies to procedures in place. Make sure there's an employee handbook in place for what any questions around what I'm not supposed to do as an employee.

Make sure there's an opportunity for two-way communications where the administration can share the strategic plan, vision, and goals along the library. And also, on the other side of communications where we can hear back from the staff, where they see they fit. Where they see their strengths, their weaknesses, and their own individualized goals.

Mr. Latimer: One thing we can also put in place, which we do have in place is the evaluation process where staff are partners in doing their own evaluations. Having an annual evaluation, and from there we're able to capture the data around the strengths. Where they need to be developed at, where that development fits in with the strategic teaching plan. And identifying those resources in a community within the library profession. Cleveland State University, Case (Western Reserve), the educational partners ... Where we can support the development from adult services, children services. Whether it's our buildings, manager trying to up skill themselves around new technologies, around the function of a building.

Mr. Latimer: Whether it's our IT person getting those latest and greatest skills in the ever-changing technology environment. So, it's just having a structure in place and being very proactive to execute that plan.

Ms. Turner: Okay, thank you very much.

Dr. Harris: And that takes care of question five, right there.

Ms. Turner: Was that?

Ms. Shaheed: Yeah, and number four. Yeah, he more or less answered it to me a great deal, but number 12 ... Would you describe your management and supervision style? Although you've commented on that mostly already.

Mr. Latimer: Yeah, my management and supervision style is very hands on. It's very transparent. There are things I micromanage, where you have an expectation that you're confident that your managers and staff members ... They know their job descriptions, and they know their roles. They're creative, they're able to bring things to the table. It's my job as a leader to make sure that those things are in place so we can execute their vision as it connects to the library's overall vision.

Mr. Latimer: There are things I do micromanage. Timelines to be met, grants to go after, and make sure we're meeting those deadlines. Our budget is intact, that we're not overspending. I've had consistent communications with the fiscal officer. I have regular meetings with the IT network manager, I have regular meetings with the executive assistant, with ... So being just across the board available. Every day I'm in the building, I walk around. And if the staff

member is not assisting a patron, I have a conversation with them to see how their day is going.

Mr. Latimer: To see if there's anything I can assist them with. Just to find out what's happening within the library, anything I need to know. So very accessible from the pages all the way up to the Fiscal office.

Ms. Shaheed: Thank you.

Mr. Mays: Okay Mr. Latimer, I have really two questions for you. One, why should we vote for you as the library director of East Cleveland?

Mr. Latimer: You should vote for me to be the permanent library director because we've had some successes during this interim period, I've listed some of those successes as well. In addition to my over 30 years of public library experience, and most of those years as an administrator of management. But my focus has been this last, what? Nine or 10 months here in East Cleveland has been a smooth transition with the day to day operations.

Mr. Latimer: The boiler was temporarily repaired and survived through the winter, spring. I didn't do the work, but it happened at my leadership. We have some movement on the PACE project. We increased the number of hot spots, which is such a great resource to our community. We have a new volunteer policy; we updated our tuition assistant policy. We have movement on digitizing the Icabod Flewellen collection. We have the patron of the month program in place. Staff morale is improving.

Mr. Latimer: We're very aggressive in community engagement, where partners are calling us and wanting to do things with us. And a little more visible. We have this new digital literacy initiative. I've work with an outside contractor; we have a new data base that collects data around our strategic plan and grants. It's called Monday.com.

Mr. Latimer: We have the new quarterly program guide, and we hired a new security monitor. So, within the last 12 months, those are the major successes under my leadership that we have in place.

Mr. Mays: And to follow up on that type of question. Will you have an open-door policy within the leadership from the employees, if they have problems or questions or what have you ... Will you have an open-door policy for them always to be accessible to the persons as working under your auspices?

Mr. Latimer: Absolutely, one thing if you haven't noticed during central role, I did not move my office into the director's office. I kept my space in the human resources office so I can be not only available to staff, but available to the

community. During the times I'll come out in a meeting outside of the building or I'm in the building ... Patrons feel comfortable coming to me, and staff of course feels very easy, accessible to me. When I walk through the building, if they need a private moment, I schedule a time with them.

Mr. Latimer: There's no time that I have not met with a staff member based on their need.

Mr. Mays: And that raises this question, if you are putting it at office. So, like just as the director of the East Cleveland Public Library and the policy procedure will inform your guests supervisors or whomever the departments that there are policies in place, as far as if they ... Before they dismiss them or reprimand a person, have those notes be in their record as well as informing them they have an opportunity to come to the board if they are dismissed. Would that be part of your policies, I've seen posts as executed. If they're employed ...

Mr. Mays: I mean if the supervisor reprimands an employee for some reason or another, will that be in their personnel file?

Mr. Latimer: That's ... We're all about legally ... We are all about transparency. First of all, we want a culture of we don't want to fire anybody. We want a culture where we want the opportunity to give everyone a chance to be part of it. If they work here, to grow and develop and correct issues that come up. My management experience around personnel as performance management where there's no surprises ... Ever any surprises when someone gets to that point that we have to separate ways.

Mr. Latimer: There's always that process of here's your job description, let's discuss goals, let's discuss our vision and the library's goals. Let's meet in six months and want you to evaluate yourself. Here's an annual evaluation. If they get to the point where there's problems, let's do a performance improvement plan. Once we get to the performance improvement plan and there's no improvements, let's move to this last chance agreement.

Mr. Latimer: So, my goal is to go over and beyond to save that employee. Most recently we've lost two employees. One based on she just never came back, and we did everything to ... In our power, over and beyond to give her an opportunity. Because there were some personal issues. The other issue was we extended this person to a last chance agreement when we did not. So, we did everything to work with this employee, and they decided to do the same thing.

Mr. Mays: But my question to you, will there be documentation in their personnel file that you met with them, or the supervisor met with them and noted that?

And how many chances are there left, right? To ask you as well, how many chances you would give a person before they are dismissed.

Mr. Latimer: Yes, everything is documented. Everything up to this point, with any changes. And our personnel here, those files are up to date. How many chances depends on the infraction, depends on the situation. If it's theft, of course those things are immediate. If it's something like attendance issues, or tardy. We try to look and see what brought on those disciplines of around tardy. Then we try to look at how do we make any adjustments and schedule changes?

Mr. Latimer: So, it depends on the individual. I can't say ... It's a gray area, it's not black and white.

Mr. Mays: Let me just, this is the last question and I'll yield. Have you ever been the director of a library as you're coming into this position now? Have you ever been the director of a library?

Mr. Latimer: I come from a big system. All of my library experience has been in Cleveland Public Library, it's a large system. But I have the title of Director of Neighborhood Libraries, where I was responsible ... The director of 28 neighborhood libraries in the city of Cleveland.

Mr. Mays: Under your auspice, right?

Mr. Latimer: Yes.

Ms. Turner: Yeah.

Mr. Mays: Okay, just wanted ... This question is similar to what I was going to ask.

Ms. McClarin: Yeah, you took care of number three thank you for that. What distinguished you for that job. Is there anything else Mr. Mays? We can come back around to you.

Mr. Mays: I just ... One question tells me how you would work with the board and keeping the board informed as to what's going on.

Mr. Latimer: Okay, in my experience ... Actually, I was on a board, I Can School's for seven years.

Ms. McClarin: Oh, you were at I Can?

Mr. Latimer: The schools were actually bought out by a management company. Although I'm pro public schools, they begged me to be on this board where I

ultimately became the board president for most of those years. That was just additional work. Working with the board, the board is in charge of the library, the staff, the director, fiscal officer reports to the board. We run the day to day operations of the library and the finances.

Mr. Latimer: It's our responsibility to be open, transparent, respectful. Able to communicate in writing, verbally. Pick up the phone and call for direction, call for advice, call to reach another stakeholder. Because we understand that the board has relationships and contacts beyond in community that the director may not have. I understand that.

Mr. Latimer: Just two-way communications, the opportunity to work as a team to move the library forward. To be engaging at the state level, the local level. To be supportive, to be visible. And just to be a champion of the services that we provide and a champion for the staff.

Mr. Mays: Would you add to, or do you see programs that we have now that's not working well? What are the programs that you would like to implement under your auspices?

Mr. Latimer: Okay.

Mr. Mays: Successful, just say that.

Mr. Latimer: I do have a presentation I wanted to present; I just want to know when it's appropriate in the interview process. We'll do that, so Ms. McClarin, should I do that now?

Ms. McClarin: No, we're going to let you have last word.

Mr. Latimer: Okay.

Ms. McClarin: You can present it then.

Mr. Latimer: Okay, Mr. Mays question, one of the things in my months here as interim where I know we ... Actually, at the state level we're meeting what we need to meet, as far as adult services, technology, child readiness. Although we need to expand on those. Where I see a lack of efficiency is how we provide services to children, specifically early literacy. And that has to do with the collection that we have, it's a developing and up skilling the staff that we have in place.

Mr. Latimer: So that's one of the biggest challenges in my observation from my experiences that we would need to make changes to.

Ms. McClarin: Okay, thank you. I want to take number ... I was going to ask question seven, but I'm going to put six along with it. Because six is just asking you what your vision is, and you kind of gave some of it already. But the main question is if you have control over creating that ideal work environment for yourself here at the library ... What would it be like? And it also mentioned about the board, but Mr. Mays brought that up, so that's covered.

Ms. McClarin: But it's the same thing as saying your vision, you know the question is the same. But what we're looking for is not so much what is, but if you have any kind of idea right now if not a full vision of where you see it going ... Where it needs to go, and where you fit in.

Mr. Latimer: Okay...

Ms. McClarin: Is that...

Mr. Latimer: And that question, it's in my short little presentation.

Ms. McClarin: Okay, then we'll skip that because we only have one other question.

Mr. Latimer: Okay.

Ms. McClarin: And that is if you would list even your most or your proudest accomplishments, or if you have a couple you could discuss that with us.

Mr. Latimer: Okay, well being a father.

Ms. McClarin: Oh excellent.

Mr. Latimer: I have son. So, most people wouldn't say that's a great accomplishment-

Ms. McClarin: Oh yes, it is!

Mr. Turner: It is!

Ms. McClarin: Being a parent, I learned the hard way it's been ... Yeah, very important.

Mr. Latimer: Having a great connection with family and friends, and being a ... My personality, always open to new friends and family. I think that's a good characteristic and accomplishment.

Ms. McClarin: I agree with you.

Mr. Latimer: Professionally, just being here in East Cleveland sitting in this seat is an accomplishment. To be a director, most times it just ... This is lucky, you

have to leave the area for these types of opportunities. Because at some point it's so political. Or you have to wait a long time, because in these seats people don't leave. So, it's just amazing that, you know not the previous director ... She left and I happened to have the experience and a desire to want to come into this community and help shape and move this library forward. And bring new services and stabilize the services that we have.

Ms. McClarin: Excellent.

Mr. Latimer: And just be a part of ... It's never about me, one thing for me, my name doesn't have to be on anything. I'm just a mover and a shaker behind the scenes.

Ms. McClarin: Right.

Mr. Latimer: To make things happen. And that's what I enjoy doing. Within the library movement, it's been just the little things. One of the things the director told me to do when I became director of the branch as well is being in a black community our library's are opening up late all the time. And as being a public entity, that doesn't look good. We need to change that.

Mr. Latimer: I changed that immediately, because it's a collective bargaining environment, where it's a union environment. It's very difficult to make changes, so my strategy was to make changes where I could. Then strategize to get where we needed to go. So, I mandated that all managers open the libraries. So that eliminated the late openings, and with the union I was able to negotiate lead worker incentives. So, when another employee that's not a manager needed to open the building, they receive extra compensation.

Ms. McClarin: Oh, excellent.

Mr. Latimer: So, we went from 28 libraries that were maybe 10 would open from day to day late, down to zero.

Ms. McClarin: Excellent.

Mr. Latimer: So that was a major accomplishment. Transitioning the community from VHS to DVD's. The other big accomplishment the director wanted us to get up to 20-30 computers in the libraries and dealing with the librarians. They don't like to get rid of books, they don't like to get rid of bookshelves. And I was a lot younger then, these people are respected they taught me a lot of things.

Mr. Latimer: So, I had to go in their building to tell them that they had to weed their collections, they have to get rid of these shelves. We had to put in new

furniture to accommodate all of these new computers that were coming in. So that was a big accomplishment, but they were like "He doesn't know what he's doing. He's messing up..."

Ms. McClarin: Right.

Mr. Latimer: ...He's getting rid of books and all of that.

Ms. McClarin: Boxes, yeah.

Mr. Latimer: You know it was ... But somebody had to do it.

Ms. McClarin: Thanks for that. And before we close, I just want to give everyone one last chance if they have any other questions before we let Mr. Latimer give his presentation.

Mr. Mays: How will you promote this library?

Mr. Latimer: I will promote this library as an ambassador out in the community, sharing all of the great services that we offer. Having and encouraging staff around how we do outreach. Giving 100% customer service to our patrons. Being open and engaging to partners who want to work with us, but being strategic how we work with them. Just being very transparent and telling our story. And telling a positive story, we all know. And outside of East Cleveland, unless you come into this community you don't know-

Ms. McClarin: They don't know.

Mr. Latimer: The great positive things that are happening. Everybody hears about the schools, which great things are happening there. They hear about city hall; you think East Cleveland is a big dumping ground. But you come and see East Cleveland and it's not the case. There are fabulous neighborhoods within the city. And there's engaging people, and smart intelligent people. Not only on this board, or the school board, or the block clubs. And people who care, smart people who know, who bring things to the table.

Mr. Latimer: It's happening down here. So, we need to tell that story.

Ms. McClarin: It sounds like you read my paper, because that's what I always say when I'm out in the communities, I say those exact words. You have to come into East Cleveland, you'll be amazed at all of the wonderful things.

Ms. Turner: You can't watch the news.

Ms. Shaheed: Or even when the concerts, when I can't ... They got people lined up from Shaker, Cleveland Heights-

Ms. Turner: Oh yes.

Ms. Shaheed: People in East Cleveland didn't even know there was concerts here.

Ms. Turner: Yeah, those people are [crosstalk 00:42:57]-

Ms. Shaheed: You have to let them know what's going on.

Ms. Turner: But they're tied into it electronically, like they follow us [crosstalk 00:43:05]

Ms. Shaheed: Yeah, that's the main thing.

Ms. Turner: Yeah, they are tied in electronically. When they have events, they're saying "Follow the library on Facebook, follow us on Instagram, follow us" ... You know? And people are following us, and they know when the concerts are coming in. And that's part of the digital divide.

Ms. Shaheed: Right.

Ms. McClarin: Right.

Ms. Shaheed: Absolutely right.

Ms. Turner: That's a struggle.

Mr. Latimer: So, I do have a short presentation around [crosstalk 00:43:29]-

Ms. McClarin: You have the floor.

Mr. Latimer: And keep in mind, these things are not written in stone, these things are not a plan. This is a vision of how we need to have conversations to move to some of these initiatives.

Ms. McClarin: Thank you for having us [crosstalk 00:43:45]-

Mr. Latimer: So, this is the Executive Director's two-year vision and focus. I know every time everything is like a five-year plan, or a 10-year plan. We know the world is changing really, really, fast, we don't even know what president we're going to have in a few years, or health care. All of these things. [crosstalk 00:44:02]

Ms. McClarin: Madame Chair, you can see it?

Mr. Latimer: Okay, my vision is for this library to be the information center for the city of East Cleveland.

Ms. McClarin: All right.

Mr. Latimer: This is to redesign the reference room to an information and circulation center. We would like to create a space where people can come in and copy, digital and photo printing, scanning, and faxing services. Offer CD and DVD duplication services. Offer paper shredding services. Notary services, passport services. Which moving forward we've submitted the application for the passport. We have three staff members who are able to notarize on staff. We actually had four, but one of them left.

Mr. Latimer: So, we do offer that, but we haven't marketed that service yet. We want to upscale our staff to be 21st century reference information specialists. Where they're using electronic databases, they're using some of the great resources to get really good information to our community. We want to continue to register the library cards, voter registration, Ohio Buckeye card, et cetera.

Mr. Latimer: We want to also have and maintain an electronic newly bulletin board for information of events and resources around the city of East Cleveland. And we would like to be a destination center for events in this library space, both for public and private events.

Mr. Latimer: And as far as our printing and coloring, we want patrons to come in doing brochures, flyers, letterhead. We want businesses to come in and to do their business here. Keep in mind, there is no Kinko's in this community.

Ms. McClarin: Right, exactly.

Dr. Harris: Right.

Mr. Latimer: We should provide that service.

Ms. McClarin: That service.

Mr. Latimer: We could redesign our reference area into an information center providing services like this.

Mr. Latimer: Children services, I would like to build a stronger collection of children's books that celebrate and reflect African American culture and history for all school age children. We would like to emphasize the importance and raise the level of the summer reading club, and activities around the summer reading club. We'd like to professionally develop and upscale the entire

youth services staff. We have some things and plays scheduled for the fall around collection development and early literacy.

Mr. Latimer: We'd like to strengthen the relationship with East Cleveland school district by promoting and reinforcing reading initiatives. And also, copartner for author visits virtually or in person. We would like to buy a collection of books, and if we can't bring that author here, using technology in those classrooms and we can make our students have that relationship with that author.

Mr. Latimer: Of course, we can work with Dr. Harris over at Shaw.

Dr. Harris: We did.

Mr. Latimer: There are some real cool teen authors, and some of them are from Ohio, so ... So, I want to create early literacy programs, do a kindergarten club, start them early. We want to do a new moms club for pregnant mothers.

Dr. Harris: That would work.

Mr. Latimer: But we also like to train staff with providing reading and advisory for all school aged children. And of course, we want our collection to reflect images that children see in themselves, which are very positive. Which encourages them to be readers, to be innovators, to be thinkers. Being able to be a strategic thinker.

Mr. Latimer: For adult services and seniors, we would like to build on and continue our technology outreach for seniors and adults. I want to bring in and offer a film and movie programs to bring in independent films, do a popular afternoon matinee movie experience for older adults. We know they like to come early in the day at noon to watch a movie. So, we can make it earlier in the day and they can be out of here before the kids to come in. [crosstalk 00:47:53]

Mr. Latimer: Make a schedule to take to McGregor and bring them here.

Ms. McClarin: Excellent, that would be great.

Mr. Latimer: Develop a collection management policy for books, periodicals and the AV collection. We do not have a collection-

Ms. Turner: Policy.

Mr. Latimer: Policy, collection management policy. So, we can do that. Digitize the library's special collections and develop programs around those subjects

and those collections. We are moving that forward. We've been working with the Cleveland Digital Public Library to digitize the Ichabod Flewellen collection. So those steps are in place.

Mr. Latimer: We also would like to be a platform, space, and resource for social groups and their activities and interests. Including the arts, crafts, photography, investing, film, cook clubs, and other constructive and learning avenues. That platform can be here in person or can be through social media. We would like our community to come here and explore and partner with other interests alike. And we would like to provide resources to support, whether it's books, whether it's magazines ... Their interests through social media or in person.

Mr. Latimer: We would like to also promote the online digital Shaw yearbook collection. Add a donate button on our page to generate revenues.

Ms. McClarin: Right.

Mr. Latimer: For the library. You know Shaw High School has been in existence since what? 1900's, all the way to the most recent class. Where people go to the East Cleveland Public library's website and look at those yearbooks. And it's an opportunity to support that, just by putting a donate button. Whether it's a dollar, two dollars. Putting your Visa card, MasterCard ... I know there's some other new things that ... Cash App, things like that.

Mr. Latimer: But that's the direction we see. By promoting that yearbook collection, we may be able to develop some funding and revenues around that. Technology, digital literacy initiative. We would like to push our immediate. Lynda.com, hoopla, and databases. I've been out meeting with stakeholders in the community, I know that everyone doesn't live close to this library, how can they connect with us?

Mr. Latimer: First of all, they have to have connectivity, access to the internet. But once they get there they can go on to our website and have access to books, audiobooks, movies, professional development around Lynda.com. So really great things. We would also introduce 3D printing. Of course, you know the big thing in public libraries, maker spaces. We don't really have a budget but there is a large maker space down the street at Case Western Reserve..

Mr. Latimer: But we can introduce some of that with the 3D printing, which is something that we can do within our budget. Introduce virtual augmented reality. Increase the number of hotspots in the collection and be part of a community wide committee to bring free and affordable Wi-Fi connectivity.

Mr. Latimer: This is a 3D printer, and basically if you have not experience it's amazing.

Ms. McClarin: That's pretty spectacular.

Mr. Latimer: You can ...

Ms. Shaheed: I've seen them [crosstalk 00:51:09]-

Mr. Latimer: Design an ink pen, send it through on the computer, it'll come out on the 3D printer.

Ms. Shaheed: Right.

Mr. Latimer: Very amazing phenomenon.

Ms. McClarin: [inaudible 00:51:17] like that.

Mr. Latimer: But we definitely would like to introduce this new technology to this community.

Ms. McClarin: Oh, they would eat it up.

Mr. Latimer: The building, we'll continue to move forward the property assessment and energy law program PACE. We, our own target ... If you walk through the building, you'll see some changes with the lighting. We talked about that at the buildings and grounds meeting.

Mr. Latimer: Strategize the library to receive the parcel of land behind the building.

Ms. Turner: Yes.

Mr. Latimer: So that's in the works, we just have to figure out how we're going to get there. And conversations are ongoing. Redesign and update the reference room into an information center, we talked about it a little earlier. Update the outdoor signage. And also explore renewable energy sources, such as solar panels versus turbines. Or a reliable propane generator that could help deliver electricity during power outages or other emergencies.

Mr. Latimer: This is something that's really happening in these communities.

Ms. Turner: Right.

Mr. Latimer: People are looking for alternative ways to cut down on their electric bill. And they'll use solar panels and windmills, could be a reality if [crosstalk 00:52:33]-

Ms. McClarin: I mean we have a solar energy farm right down the street.

Mr. Latimer: Right, this is just a vision.

Ms. McClarin: Right.

Mr. Latimer: I know it's a whole discussion on how-

Ms. Turner: Oh, how to make it happen.

Mr. Latimer: To make it happen.

Ms. McClarin: Yeah.

Mr. Latimer: I can see Mr. Mays already "We just got the roof repaired, why do you have to solar panels up there". Other things of important focus ... Strong outreach and engagement to the community. Continue to identify problems that will help remove barriers in the community. This is a food desert, people are hungry, people don't have things like Pampers for their children. They don't have clothing when it's wintertime, they'll have summer clothes.

Mr. Latimer: There's some real barriers for our community to live a comfortable normal life.

Dr. Harris: Quality life.

Mr. Latimer: Life. Strategic planning evaluates our strategic plan 2017-2020, which is in place right now. And be part of a plan to develop 2021-2024. Aggressively identify other funding opportunities and partners. Remain active around advocacy for our main funding source, which is the Public Library Fund. If we're not at the table, they forget about us.

Ms. McClarin: That's true.

Mr. Latimer: Work effectively with the board and the fiscal officer to communicate the management of the library's budget. Building the grounds, personnel, programming, and policies, procedures. Managing power and encourage the staff to excellent servants to the community. And this is one of our big challenges, being a food desert. Our community's not getting healthy choices. We're looking at some partners, these things hopefully will be coming into play moving forward.

Mr. Mays: What did you say that was?

Mr. Latimer: Healthy food.

Mr. Mays: I still didn't understand what you said.

Mr. Latimer: Oh, this community, there's no opportunity for produce [crosstalk 00:54:40]-

Ms. Turner: And we don't have....

Mr. Mays: Oh produce, I thought you said...

Mr. Latimer: So, we need to work with partners who do those type of things and partner with the library to make healthy produce available.

Ms. McClarin: ...and everything, yeah.

Mr. Latimer: That's my vision on how I see the library moving forward, and I hope to work with the board and management team to make this vision happen.

Mr. Mays: And how will you bring the staff up to power in executing these visions that you have laid out here?

Mr. Latimer: Everything, all of the ... Any initiative or all initiatives is done by committee. Like I said earlier in there, this is not about me it's about the staff and how we can move this community forward. We always have discussions around the pros and cons, is this something we can do? Is this something libraries can do? Is this something we can legally do? Is this something within our special commitment to this community that we should be doing?

Mr. Latimer: But we always have that conversation. These wouldn't be things I just push down on staff. It would be something the board discussed as well as the staff.

Mr. Mays: But what I'm ... I guess my question, if they need to be tutored in those areas, then would you formalize a budget whereas they can go outside to get this training that they may need? Any entities that you have identified as part of your vision for this library.

Mr. Latimer: Well we do, and actually I kind of walked in on how they do things here. Like staff development day, we put the word out within staff, who wants to be part of this. Who wants to be part of a certain initiative, who wants to be part of an organization that's coming in and passing out food? We kind of gauged the interest around individuals, then of course if they're interested, they have that skill.

Mr. Latimer: But a lot of times staff come to me and say, "I would like to do this; however, I don't know how to do it." We're always looking to give the staff the training opportunities we have NEO-RLS, and looking for ways to up skill. This is the 21st century, the information is out there if you want to up skill

yourself. So, we as librarians and staff members that are around information, we can get that done.

Mr. Latimer: There's a budget for staff development.

Mr. Mays: Okay, that's what I was asking.

Mr. Latimer: Yes.

Mr. Mays: Is that? Because I don't like to see people just coming in eradicating staff that we have here and bringing on other. I understand that you probably want people that are working with you and help to implement your particular program. So that's why I asked that question, because I feel that's very important. Yeah, they do need training in those areas, people will be happier. And we would like to see people of color, a lot of time in some of these areas.

Mr. Latimer: Okay.

Mr. Mays: Instead of operating that ... That we can operate a business.

Ms. McClarin: Thank you Mr. Mays, thank you Mr. Latimer. Last question is, you still have the floor. What is it you would like to say to us? Or you know if you want to express what you expect from the board?

Mr. Latimer: I just want to thank the board for being accessible, available, encouraging, critical when necessary. Constructive criticism is excellent. I would like ... That's how I ... I don't know everything; I don't have an expertise. My expertise may be library work, but I'm not a lawyer, I'm not an accountant. And I'm not a building trades person, and I'm not an educator. This board brings a diverse experience of a lot of things and if I'm selected for that position I would definitely like to tap into your expertise as well.

Mr. Latimer: Along with what we have on staff to just move this community and move this library forward. That's all I have.

Ms. McClarin: Thank you. Is that it one the board? Okay, then I'll just hand you this back. [crosstalk 00:59:24] I've got to stand, no?

Ms. Turner: No, no, no [crosstalk 00:59:24]-

Ms. McClarin: Oh, we got to get back to the disk? [crosstalk 00:59:24]

Ms. Turner: No before that [crosstalk 00:59:24] you do have to go back to the agenda. [crosstalk 00:59:24]-

Ms. McClarin: I'm sorry. [crosstalk 00:59:24]

Mr. Mays: Before we go back to the agenda, I just need to ask the question ... In reference to-

Ms. McClarin: You're asking Mr. Latimer or the board?

Mr. Mays: I'm asking the board now.

Ms. McClarin: Okay.

Mr. Mays: Was the position posted in the newspaper? Or how was this run?

Ms. McClarin: Okay first of [crosstalk 00:59:46]-

Mr. Mays: Is this the only candidate that we have?

Ms. McClarin: In February the personnel committee came to the board, we have the full timeline. I have a copy of it here, a full timeline on how the process would go as far as putting the announcement out. When we would do the applications, and you know how long the announcement would be out. We did have three applications turned in, which Mr. Latimer was one of the three applications.

Ms. McClarin: We had a process set up that was voted on also that once we did the score you have to have at least a score of 80 in order to get an interview. The personnel committee, and we had one staff person which is Mr. Turner, did the applications. We spent four hours on three applications, so we made sure we had discussion. We each individually voted, everything is on public record, you can see it. You can see who scored, who voted, and whatever like that.

Ms. McClarin: And so, I think the second highest person who would have gotten an interview was in the 70's. Everybody else scored under 80. They all ... A lot matched the skills, but you know a lot of varied skills or anything like that. But I think that everybody had a very fair choice and a fair opportunity.

Ms. Turner: All of that information is available for board members to read.

Mr. Mays: Okay, I just wanted to make sure that-

Ms. Turner: Oh no we had ... I mean the thing that is true, the committee did an amazing job in they came up with that timeline and the structure that we voted on in February, and they followed it to the letter. The things that we asked them to do when we met in February they absolutely did. And so there it is.

Ms. McClarin: So, I'm going to turn it back over to the president, that's what I'm supposed to do. [crosstalk 01:02:06] The interview is over, and I'm going to turn it back to the president now.

IV. Audience Participation

Ms. Turner: The thing on the agenda was to open the floor for public questions and comments. Ms. Chambliss, would you like to [crosstalk 01:02:21]-

Mr. Mays: If we could just, before we do that matter turn. I think that we need to make a decision as to ... And not keep in Mr. Latimer in suspense. The purpose of this meeting, I guess-

Ms. Turner: ...It's strictly for interview.

Mr. Mays: Just the interview?

Ms. Turner: The process, just so ... I will tell you what the process from here on out is. We will gather, we have our next meeting. Be it, this was the intention as laid out in February. We meet on Monday, when we meet on Monday one of the things that will be on our agenda is an executive session. When we will talk about whether we're going to make an offer, what does it look like? What is that thing? And then everybody when we come out of executive session, we will vote to do that. We'll take that vote.

Ms. Turner: But we need everybody to be ... And one of the things, the reason we do not have it on agenda today was because we knew that our entire board would not be able to be here. So that's the reason we're not doing it today, we'll do it at our meeting on Monday. And that was laid out when we talked about it in February.

Ms. Turner: Is there anything else? Can we get back to Ms. Chambliss now? Okay Ms. Chambliss, I'm sorry.

Ms. Chambliss: Yes, I'd just like to say being an employee of the East Cleveland Public Library, that Mr. Latimer, I see a lot of good things in him. And I liked how he jumped right in and carried the library forth. And how he spent time with the management team, you know collaborating and getting their feedback on doing different things. And I also like how he's very knowledgeable about

library things, and also with the grants and stuff. How we receive money and things, you know?

Ms. Chambliss: So, I just see a lot of good things going on.

Ms. Turner: Thank you.

Ms. Chambliss: In the library, and ...

Ms. McClarin: Thanks for sharing.

V. Adjournment

Ms. Turner: Thank you for being here. Okay, that is our only person, our only public member.

Dr. Harris: I will take a motion for adjourn, moving for adjourn. Can I get a second?

Ms. McClarin: I second.

Discussion: None.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Turner (yes), Ms. McClarin (yes), Ms. Shaheed (yes), Mr. Mays (yes), Dr. Harris (yes)

Yes – 5

Motion passes.

[The meeting adjourned at 3:44 PM]

Dr. Harris moved, and Ms. McClarin seconds the motion to adjourn.

Motion passes for adjournment.



Ms. Terra Turner, President

Ms. Synor, Secretary

